

C L A I M S

1. A content management system comprising:

a first acceptance unit which accepts a storage request including a content ID to identify a content;

5 a storage unit which, based on the storage request, records reference data which is used to make reference to the content and the content ID in a recording unit in association with each other when the content has been already recorded in the recording unit, and records the content and the content ID in the
10 recording unit in association with each other when the content is not yet recorded;

a second acceptance unit which accepts an acquisition request including the content ID;

15 a unit which reads the content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

a unit which distributes the content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer.

20 2. The content management system according to claim 1, wherein, when the content is not yet recorded in the recording unit, the storage unit requests a storage request issuer for the content, and records the content accepted from the storage request issuer and
25 the content ID in the recording unit in association with each other.

3. The content management system according to

claim 1, wherein the first acceptance unit accepts the storage request and the content.

4. A content management system comprising:

5 a unit which accepts a storage request including change content obtained by changing content whose utilization restriction is released by right data and a content ID to identify the content;

10 a unit which, based on the storage request, makes reference to a recording unit which records utilization restricting data used to restrict the utilization of the content and the content ID in association with each other to create a storage content obtained by restricting the use of the change content by using the utilization restricting data;

15 a storage unit which issues a storage content ID to identify the storage content, provides a storage request issuer with the storage content ID, and records in the recording unit the storage content ID and the storage content in association with each other;

20 a unit which accepts an acquisition request including the storage content ID;

a unit which reads the storage content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

25 a unit which distributes the storage content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer.

5. The content management system according to

claim 4, wherein the storage unit issues the storage content ID, provides the storage request issuer with the storage content ID and records the storage content ID and the storage content in the recording unit in association with each other when the storage content and the storage content ID are not yet recorded in the recording unit in association with each other, and records reference data which is used to make reference to the storage content and the storage content ID in the recording unit in association with each other when the storage content and the storage content ID have been already recorded in the recording unit in association with each other.

6. A content management system comprising:

15 a unit which accepts a storage request including a content ID to identify a content whose utilization restriction is released by right data and positional data of a partial content as a part of the content with respect to the content;

20 a unit which, based on the storage request, makes reference to a recording unit which records utilization restricting data used to restrict the use of the content, the content ID and the content in association with each other to create a partial content from the content and the positional data and create a storage content obtained by restricting the use of the partial content by using the utilization restricting data;

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a storage unit which issues a storage content ID to identify the storage content, provides a storage request issuer with the storage content ID, and records the storage content ID and the storage content in the recording unit in association with each other;

a unit which accepts an acquisition request including the storage content ID;

a unit which reads the storage content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

a unit which distributes the storage content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer.

7. The content management system according to claim 6, wherein the storage unit issues the storage content ID, provides the storage request issuer with the storage content ID and records the storage content ID and the storage content in the recording unit in association with each other when the storage content and the storage content ID are not yet recorded in the recording unit in association with each other, and records reference data which is used to make reference to the storage content and the storage content ID in the recording unit in association with each other when the storage content and the storage content ID have been already recorded in the recording unit in association with each other.

8. A user system comprising:

a unit which provides a content management system which stores a content with a storage request including a content ID to identify the content;

5 a unit which accepts a request for the content from the content management system and provides the content management system with the content when the content management system does not yet record the content based on the storage request;

10 a unit which provides the content management system with an acquisition request including the content ID; and

a unit which accepts the content from the content management system in accordance with the acquisition request.

15 9. A user system comprising:

a unit which creates a change content obtained by changing a content whose utilization restriction is released by right data in accordance with an instruction from a user;

20 a unit which provides a content management system which stores the content with a storage request including a content ID to identify the content and the change content;

25 a unit which accepts from the content management system a storage content ID to identify the storage content obtained by restricting the use of the change content by using utilization restricting data which is

used to restrict the use of the content;

a unit which provides the content management system with an acquisition request including the storage content ID; and

5 a unit which accepts the storage content from the content management system in accordance with the acquisition request.

10 10. A content distribution system which stores in a content management system a content distributed from a content provision system to a user system,

the content management system comprising:

a first acceptance unit which accepts a storage request including a content ID to identify the content;

15 a storage unit which, based on the storage request, records reference data which is used to make reference to the content and the content ID in a recording unit in association with each other when the content has been already recorded in the recording unit, and records the content and the content ID in the recording unit in association with each other when the
20 content is not yet recorded in the recording unit;

a second acceptance unit which accepts an acquisition request including the content ID;

25 a unit which reads the content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

a unit which distributes the content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request

issuer,

the user system comprising:

a unit which provides the content management system with the storage request;

5 a unit which provides the content management system with the acquisition request; and

a unit which accepts the content from the content management system in accordance with the acquisition request.

10 11. The content distribution system according to claim 10, wherein the storage unit requests a storage request issuer for the content and records the content accepted from the storage request issuer and the content ID in the recording unit in association with
15 each other when the content is not yet recorded in the recording unit, and

the user system further comprises a unit which provides the content management system with the content when a request for the content is accepted from the
20 content management system.

12. The content distribution system according to claim 10, wherein the first acceptance unit accepts the acquisition request and the content.

25 13. A content distribution system which provides a content whose utilization restriction is released by right data to a user system from a content provision system, and provides the right data to the user system

from a content management system,

the content management system comprising:

a unit which accepts a storage request including a content ID to identify the content and a change content
5 obtained by changing the content;

a unit which, based on the storage request, makes reference to a recording unit which records utilization restricting data which is used to restrict the use of the content and the content ID in association with
10 each other to create a storage content obtained by restricting the use of the change content by using the utilization restricting data;

a unit which issues a storage content ID to identify the storage content, provides a storage
15 request issuer with the storage content ID, and records the storage content ID and the storage content in the recording unit in association with each other;

a unit which accepts an acquisition request including the storage content ID;

20 a unit which reads the storage content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

a unit which distributes the storage content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer,

25 the user system comprising:

a unit which creates the change content in accordance with an instruction from a user;

a unit which provides the content management system with the storage request;

a unit which provides the content management system with an acquisition request including the storage content ID; and

a unit which accepts the storage content from the content management system in accordance with the acquisition request.

14. A computer-readable recording medium having a program recorded therein,

the program allowing a computer to function as:

a first acceptance unit which accepts a storage request including a content ID to identify a content;

a storage unit which, based on the storage request, records reference data which is used to make reference to the content and the content ID in a recording unit in association with each other when the content has been already recorded in the recording unit, and records the content and the content ID in the recording unit in association with each other when the content is not yet recorded in the recording unit;

a second acceptance unit which accepts an acquisition request including the content ID;

a unit which reads the content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

a unit which distributes the content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request

issuer.

15. A computer-readable recording medium having
a program recorded therein,

the program allowing a computer to function as:

5 a unit which accepts a storage request including
a change content obtained by changing a content whose
utilization restriction is released by right data and
a content ID to identify the content;

10 a unit which, based on the storage request, makes
reference to a recording unit which records utilization
restricting data which is used to restrict the use of
the content and the content ID in association with
each other to create a storage content obtained by
restricting the use of the change content by using the
15 utilization restricting data;

20 a storage unit which issues a storage content ID
to identify the storage content, provides a storage
request issuer with the storage content ID and records
the storage content ID and the storage content in the
recording unit in association with each other;

 a unit which accepts an acquisition request
including the storage content ID;

 a unit which reads the storage content from the
recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

25 a unit which distributes the storage content read
based on the acquisition request to an acquisition
request issuer.

16. A method of managing a content by using a computer, the method comprising:

accepting a storage request including a content ID to identify the content;

5 recording reference data which is used to make reference to the content and the content ID in a recording unit in association with each other when the content has been already recorded in the recording unit, and recording the content and the content ID in
10 the recording unit in association with each other when the content is not yet recorded in the recording unit, based on the storage request;

accepting an acquisition request including the content ID;

15 reading the content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

distributing the content read based on the acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer.

17. A method of managing a content by using a computer, the method comprising:

20 accepting a storage request including a change content obtained by changing a content whose utilization restriction is released by right data and a content ID to identify the content;

25 making reference to a recording unit which records utilization restricting data which is used to restricts the use of the content and the content ID in

association with each other to create a storage content obtained by restricting the use of the change content by using the utilization restricting data, based on the storage request;

5 issuing a storage content ID to identify the storage content, providing a storage request issuer with the storage content ID and recording the storage content ID and the storage content in the recording unit in association with each other;

10 accepting an acquisition request including the storage content ID;

 reading the storage content from the recording unit based on the acquisition request; and

 distributing the storage content read based on the
15 acquisition request to an acquisition request issuer.